



CITY OF WHEATLAND COMMUNITY VISION

INTRODUCTION

A Living Document

The following vision document was prepared through a collaboration of the residents of Wheatland, the City Council, and the Planning Commission. While every effort was made to anticipate future challenges, the document is intended to be a living vision that can change to accommodate new information, new technologies, and new challenges.

Used to Guide the City

While the Community Vision is not a binding document, the thoughts and ideas contained therein should be an active participant in the planning and governance process within the City of Wheatland. To ensure that the vision is fulfilled, or modified should events warrant, the City Council and Planning Commission should evaluate whether proposals that come before them would further or inhibit the fulfillment of the Community Vision. The citizens of Wheatland are encouraged to use the document as a yardstick by which to measure the actions of City governments as Wheatland becomes one of the preeminent cities in Northern California.



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VISION STATEMENT

Wheatland is committed to being a forward thinking non-reactionary city that values its small-town feel, and its agricultural and historical heritage. The Community Vision of the City of Wheatland will be guided by the following:

- A cohesive community where strong neighborhoods are the center of community identity, while the existing downtown is enlivened to ensure that the City maintains an identifiable sense of place.
- A community in which open spaces are retained to provide visual relief from urban spaces, connectivity, natural infrastructure, agricultural production, and wildlife habitat enhancement.
- A community in which the natural environment is not just sustained, but continually improved through the regeneration of natural systems.
- A community connected to the world, while striving to provide much of the City's required energy and economic opportunities locally.
- A community in which mobility is defined by the full range of motive options, including pedestrian, bicycle, public transit, private automobile, and developing transportation technologies that may become available in the future.
- A community that is not dependent on continued future growth to fund existing City services, operations, or liabilities.



WHEATLAND VISION PRINCIPLES

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

- The long-term sustainability of Wheatland shall guide the governmental decision making process.
- Water shall be used at a sustainable rate, efficiently recycled when possible, and shall be returned to local waterways in a manner that enhances the natural environment.
- Wheatland places a high priority on facilitating projects which: provide clean renewable energy, recycle existing waste streams, and improve the efficiency of industry or individuals in their use of energy and natural resources.
- To the maximum extent feasible, new development shall maintain and/or improve environmental resources.
- Open space and environmental resource preserves shall be designed to facilitate human access and enjoyment, while ensuring the preservation of the resource.
- To the maximum extent feasible, urban infrastructure shall be designed to provide environmental benefits.



WHEATLAND VISION PRINCIPLES, CON'T.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN

- The existing downtown Wheatland shall be a vital center of activity in which the historic setting shall be preserved and enhanced.
- Wheatland shall be a community of villages, each of which shall be designed to provide a distinct sense of place.
- Villages shall be connected to each other with substantial greenways to the maximum extent feasible.
- Villages shall have at their center a community gathering space such as a public square or promenade.
- Commercially designated lands shall be located within villages to provide neighborhood serving retail opportunities.
- Commercial areas will be encouraged to include residential above first floor retail uses.
- Beale Air Force Base and industrial uses shall be separated from residential uses, while ensuring ease of access from work to homes.
- Large format commercial (i.e. big box stores) and regional commercial shall be located along the State Route 65 Bypass.
- Wheatland shall seek to attract a hospital capable of serving the region to a central location within the Sphere of Influence.



WHEATLAND VISION PRINCIPLES, CON'T.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Wheatland shall encourage the creation and maintenance of a broad range of career fields that are accessible to all residents by attracting high-tech, research, medical, and light-industrial industries that would benefit from the agricultural community of Wheatland or the proximity of Beale Air Force Base.
- Wheatland shall seek to attract a full service university to partner with an exceptional community-serving hospital, technological innovators, and light manufacturers within the community.
- Wheatland shall seek to locate a regionally attractive commercial facility along the State Route 65 Bypass within the Wheatland Sphere of Influence.
- Public facilities and commercial spaces shall be integrated around public gathering places such as squares and promenades.
- Wheatland shall encourage agricultural food and fiber processors to locate in the City of Wheatland as means of creating local jobs and ensuring the viability of agriculture in Yuba County.
- Wheatland shall support the development of County policies and programs that would enhance the long-term viability of agriculture outside of Wheatland's urbanizing areas.



WHEATLAND VISION PRINCIPLES, CON'T.

MOBILITY

- Wheatland shall maintain strong regional vehicular connections by pursuing the completion of the Highway 65 Bypass.
- The transportation network of Wheatland's villages shall be designed to substantially reduce or eliminate the need for daily use of automobiles.
- Wheatland shall prioritize options for non-motorized mobility within villages.
- Vehicular parking shall not obstruct pedestrian access, nor visually dominate a development.
- Wheatland shall consider the mobility of persons in all stages of life during the design of the transportation network.
- Streets shall be designed to ensure the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, and users of alternative transportation.
- Traffic control systems shall be designed to ensure a safe, smooth flow of traffic.
- Wheatland shall seek a commuter rail connection to the City of Sacramento that is fully integrated into the local public transportation system.
- Wheatland shall seek to construct a multi-modal transit station serving to connect both local and regional public transportation options.
- Right of way shall be reserved during development for the eventual installation of a light rail, bus rapid transit, or similar local transit network.
- Commercial, industrial, educational, medical, and City offices shall be concentrated around future stops of the public transit network.



WHEATLAND VISION PRINCIPLES, CON'T.

EDUCATION

- Wheatland shall seek to locate a university near the State Route 65 Bypass within the City Sphere of Influence.
- Wheatland recognizes that actions taken to foster a strong educational system serve to strengthen the City as a whole.
- Throughout the development process, Wheatland shall maintain a strong working relationship with the Wheatland school districts in which the needs and opportunities for all parties are communicated.
- Wheatland shall inform the school districts of opportunities presented by the industries and institutions that locate in Wheatland to ensure that the City's students will have access to curriculum choices that will enable them to take advantage of local educational and career options.
- To the maximum extent feasible elementary schools shall be located within villages, and junior and senior high schools shall be located at the junction of the villages served by the schools.



- Schools shall be directly accessible from residential areas via the City-wide network of pedestrian/bicycle pathways.
- Whenever feasible, schools should be located adjacent to community gardens, in which space shall be reserved for the use by students as part of the learning environment, in conjunction with classroom instruction.



WHEATLAND VISION PRINCIPLES, CON'T.

GOVERNANCE

- Wheatland shall continue to be a full service local government, while maintaining the flexibility to work with other jurisdictions to take advantage of economies of scale when such action is prudent.
- By growing wisely, protecting environmental resources, conserving the City's rich heritage, and maintaining the quality of life, Wheatland will be an example to other cities in Northern California.
- Wheatland shall engage State, regional, County, and local governing bodies to ensure City concerns are considered and/or addressed.
- To the maximum extent feasible, City service centers shall be located within close proximity to village centers.



WHEATLAND VISION PRINCIPLES, CON'T.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Wheatland shall take into account the potential for energy generation during the land use planning process.
- Wheatland shall ensure that sufficient right-of-way is preserved to allow for the development of a citywide, fully connected public transportation system.
- Wheatland shall seek to construct a multi-modal transit station serving to connect both local and regional public transportation options.
- Wheatland shall seek opportunities to ensure that residents have access to reasonably priced, dependable, and environmentally responsible electricity.
- To the maximum extent feasible, Wheatland shall incorporate water use efficiency and reclamation into the design of the community in general and the wastewater treatment plant, in particular.
- Wheatland shall seek to attract regionally attractive medical facilities to ensure the adequate provision of services for the residents of Wheatland.



WHEATLAND VISION PRINCIPLES, CON'T.

PUBLIC SAFETY

- Public safety and security shall be a primary consideration in community design.
- Wheatland shall require new development to provide funding to maintain a high level of public safety standards.
- Public safety staffing requirements shall be based on a measurement that includes all of the equipment necessary to ensure that acceptable service levels are maintained.
- To the maximum extent feasible, Wheatland shall employ the latest technology and tactics in the field of public safety.



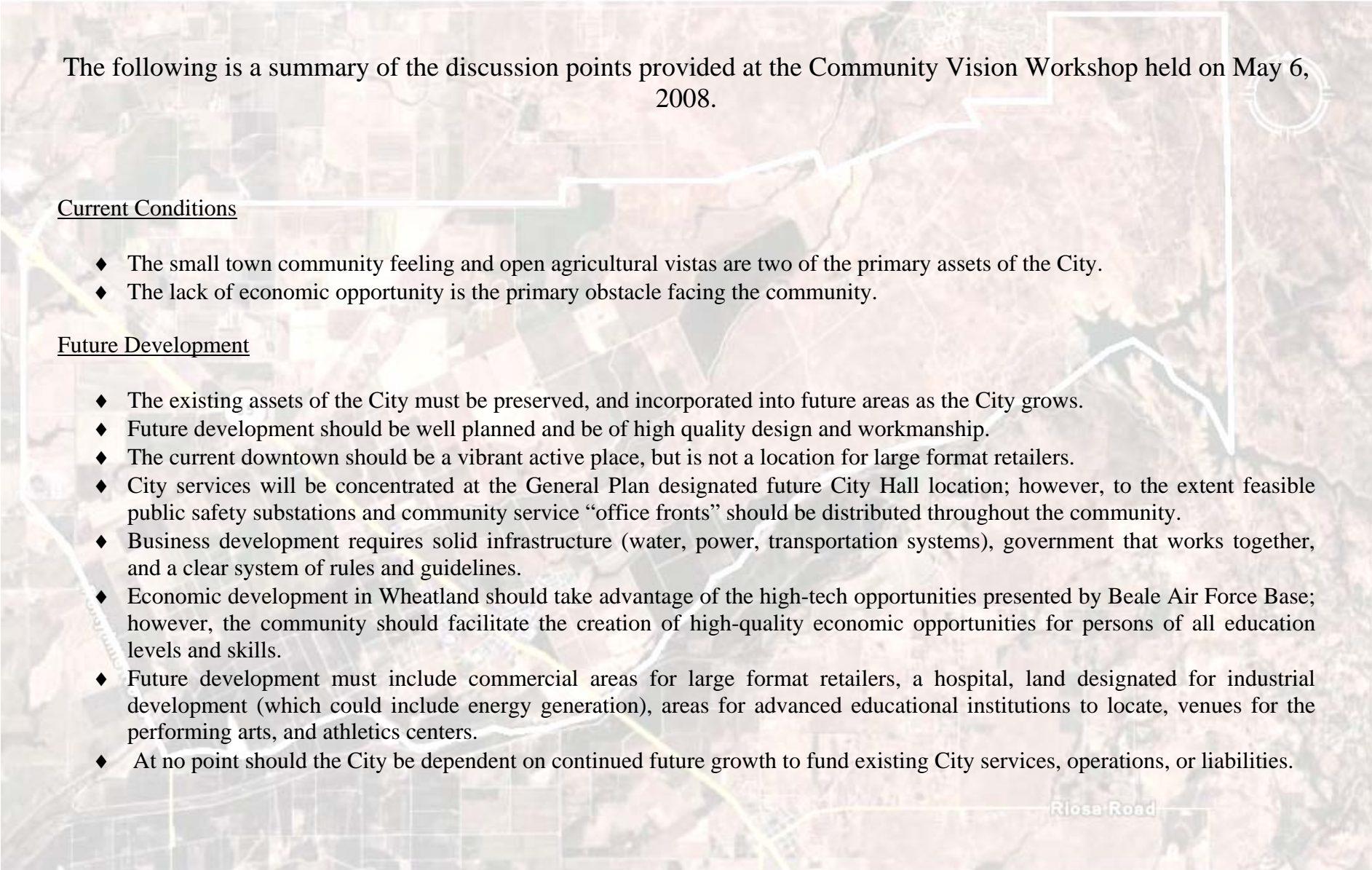
WHEATLAND VISION PRINCIPLES, CON'T.

GREEN SPACES AND RECREATION

- Wheatland's parks shall incorporate both active and passive uses to provide sporting venues, to allow for a wide variety of recreational opportunities, and to conserve environmental resources.
- Parks shall be linked by the City's pedestrian/bicycle network.
- Urban agriculture opportunities shall be incorporated into the design of parks and open space areas.
- Public gathering places shall be located in each village; however, regional parks and arts venues shall be centrally located so as to allow large Citywide gatherings.
- To the maximum extent feasible, Park and Open Space areas shall be designed in such a way as to provide environmental benefits including, but not limited to, stormwater detention and infiltration, and protection of scenic vistas that reveal the rich heritage of the City of Wheatland.



APPENDIX A



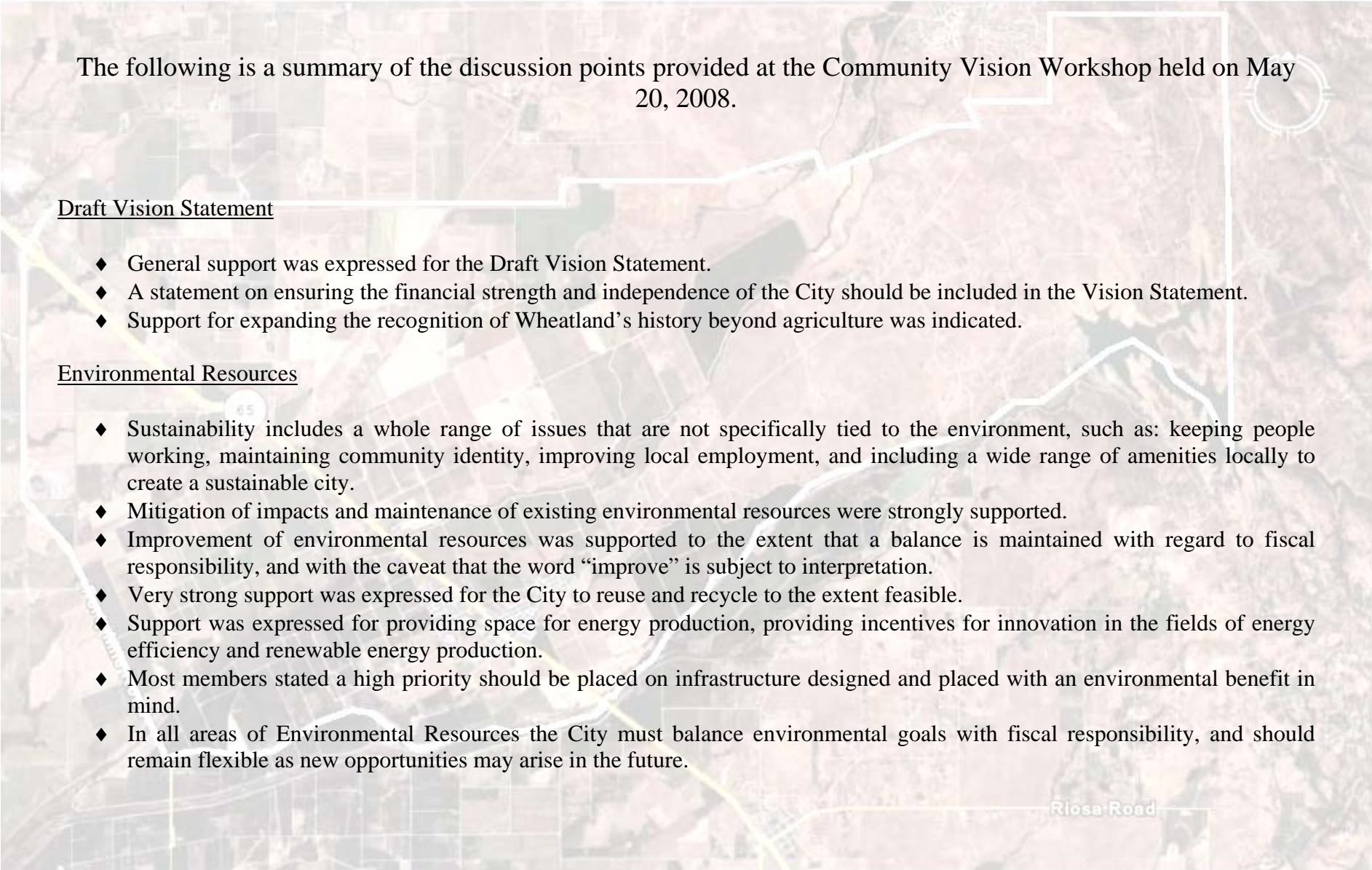
The following is a summary of the discussion points provided at the Community Vision Workshop held on May 6, 2008.

Current Conditions

- ◆ The small town community feeling and open agricultural vistas are two of the primary assets of the City.
- ◆ The lack of economic opportunity is the primary obstacle facing the community.

Future Development

- ◆ The existing assets of the City must be preserved, and incorporated into future areas as the City grows.
- ◆ Future development should be well planned and be of high quality design and workmanship.
- ◆ The current downtown should be a vibrant active place, but is not a location for large format retailers.
- ◆ City services will be concentrated at the General Plan designated future City Hall location; however, to the extent feasible public safety substations and community service “office fronts” should be distributed throughout the community.
- ◆ Business development requires solid infrastructure (water, power, transportation systems), government that works together, and a clear system of rules and guidelines.
- ◆ Economic development in Wheatland should take advantage of the high-tech opportunities presented by Beale Air Force Base; however, the community should facilitate the creation of high-quality economic opportunities for persons of all education levels and skills.
- ◆ Future development must include commercial areas for large format retailers, a hospital, land designated for industrial development (which could include energy generation), areas for advanced educational institutions to locate, venues for the performing arts, and athletics centers.
- ◆ At no point should the City be dependent on continued future growth to fund existing City services, operations, or liabilities.



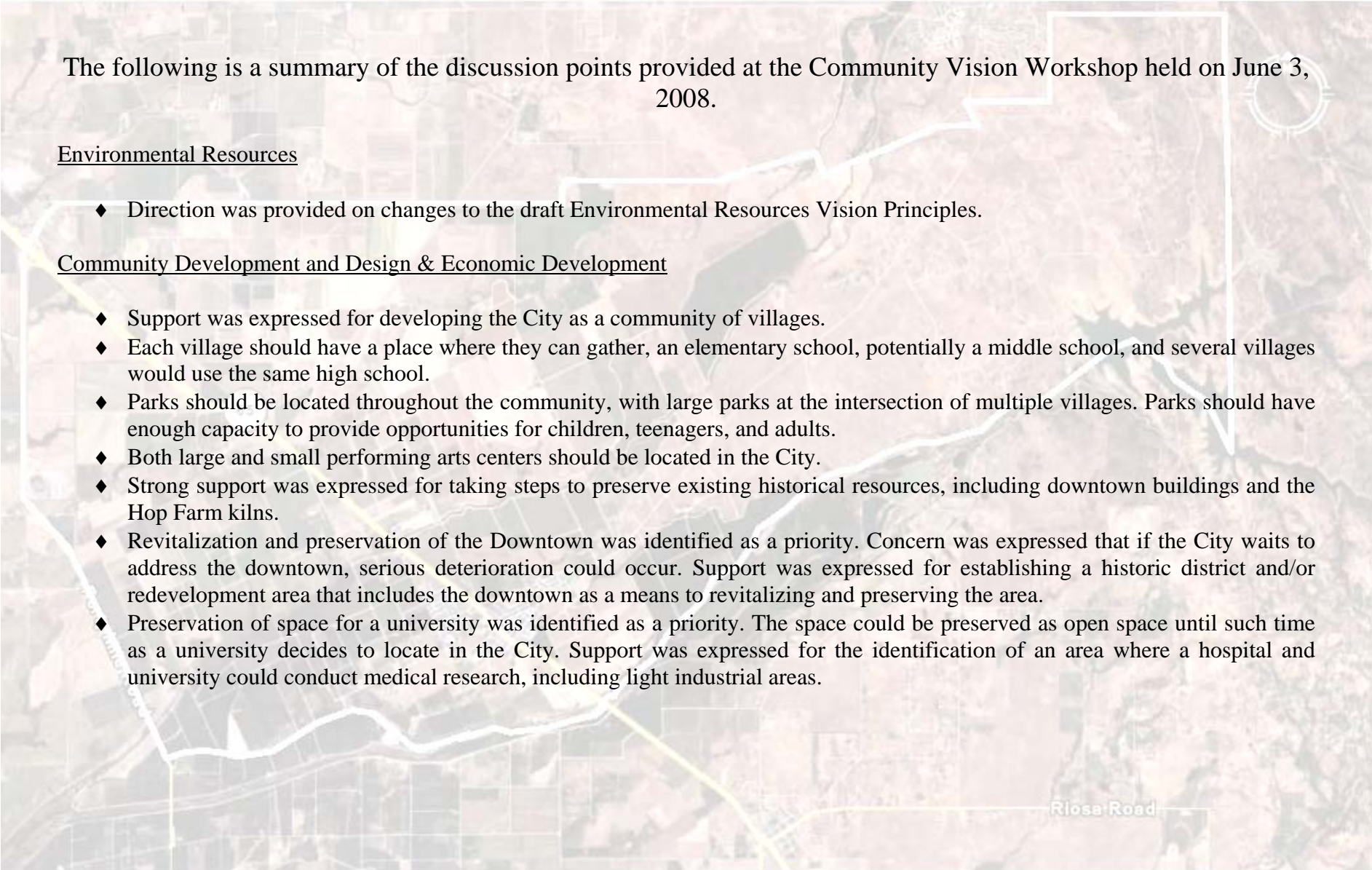
The following is a summary of the discussion points provided at the Community Vision Workshop held on May 20, 2008.

Draft Vision Statement

- ◆ General support was expressed for the Draft Vision Statement.
- ◆ A statement on ensuring the financial strength and independence of the City should be included in the Vision Statement.
- ◆ Support for expanding the recognition of Wheatland's history beyond agriculture was indicated.

Environmental Resources

- ◆ Sustainability includes a whole range of issues that are not specifically tied to the environment, such as: keeping people working, maintaining community identity, improving local employment, and including a wide range of amenities locally to create a sustainable city.
- ◆ Mitigation of impacts and maintenance of existing environmental resources were strongly supported.
- ◆ Improvement of environmental resources was supported to the extent that a balance is maintained with regard to fiscal responsibility, and with the caveat that the word "improve" is subject to interpretation.
- ◆ Very strong support was expressed for the City to reuse and recycle to the extent feasible.
- ◆ Support was expressed for providing space for energy production, providing incentives for innovation in the fields of energy efficiency and renewable energy production.
- ◆ Most members stated a high priority should be placed on infrastructure designed and placed with an environmental benefit in mind.
- ◆ In all areas of Environmental Resources the City must balance environmental goals with fiscal responsibility, and should remain flexible as new opportunities may arise in the future.



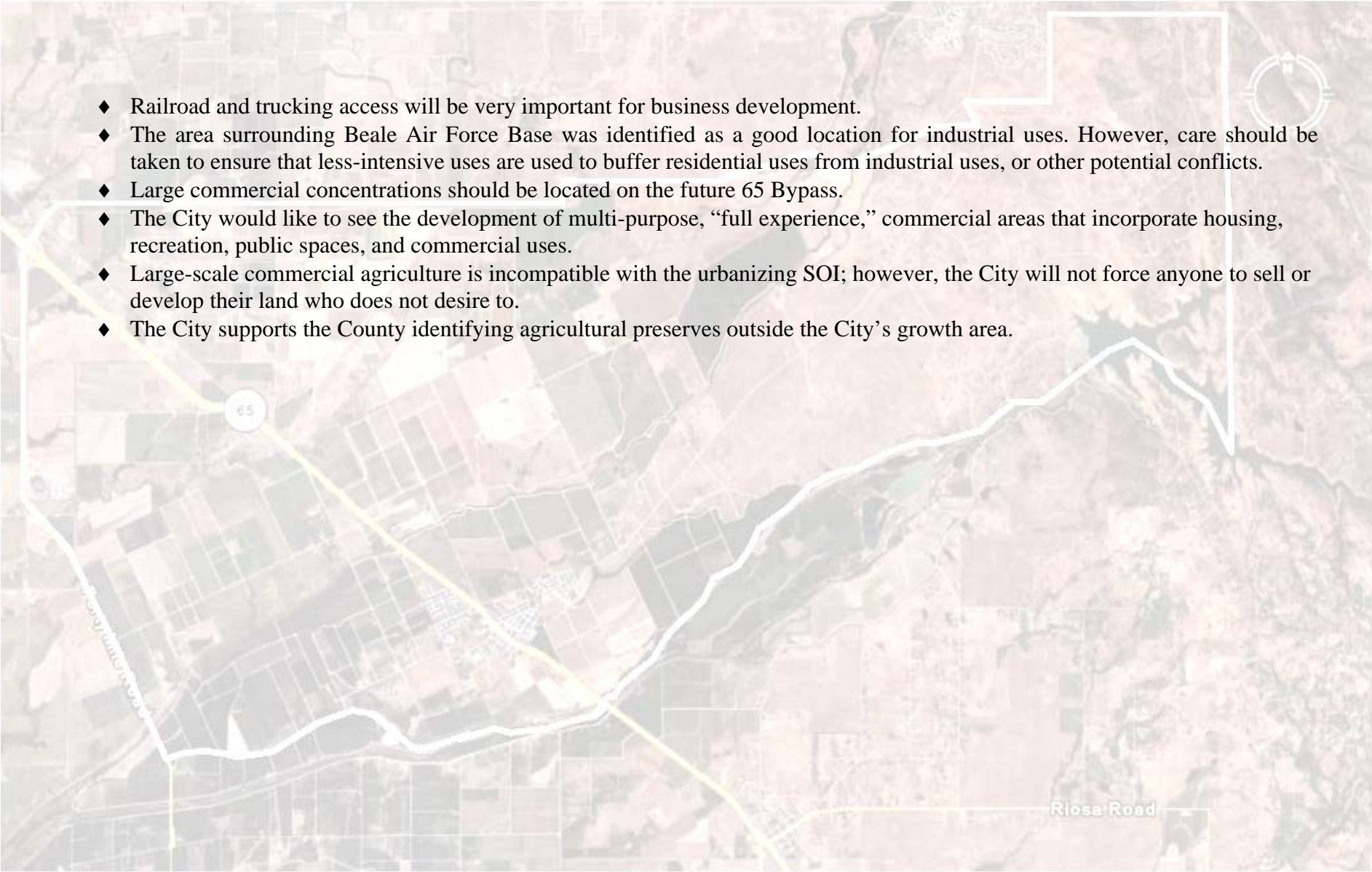
The following is a summary of the discussion points provided at the Community Vision Workshop held on June 3, 2008.

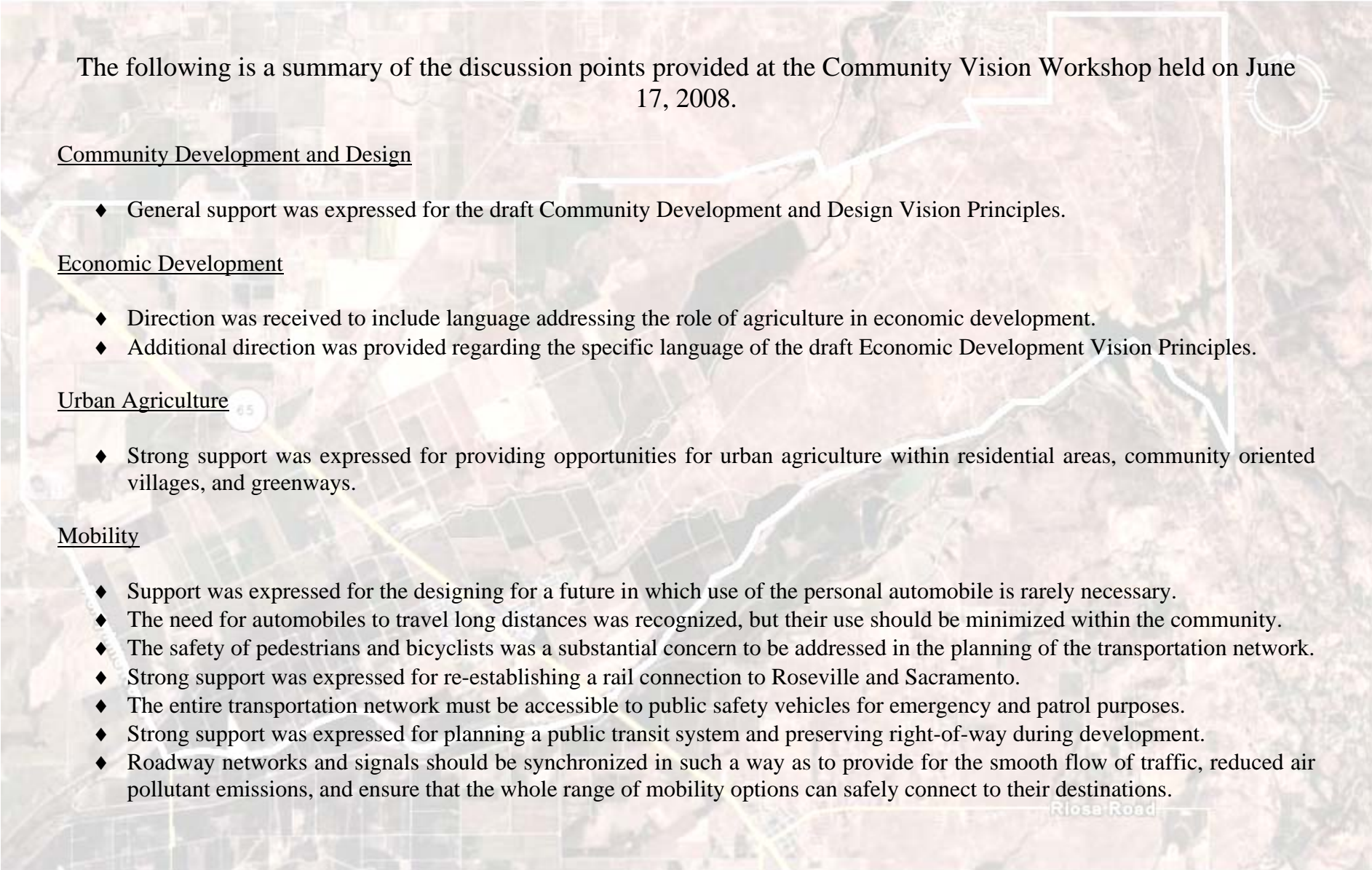
Environmental Resources

- ◆ Direction was provided on changes to the draft Environmental Resources Vision Principles.

Community Development and Design & Economic Development

- ◆ Support was expressed for developing the City as a community of villages.
- ◆ Each village should have a place where they can gather, an elementary school, potentially a middle school, and several villages would use the same high school.
- ◆ Parks should be located throughout the community, with large parks at the intersection of multiple villages. Parks should have enough capacity to provide opportunities for children, teenagers, and adults.
- ◆ Both large and small performing arts centers should be located in the City.
- ◆ Strong support was expressed for taking steps to preserve existing historical resources, including downtown buildings and the Hop Farm kilns.
- ◆ Revitalization and preservation of the Downtown was identified as a priority. Concern was expressed that if the City waits to address the downtown, serious deterioration could occur. Support was expressed for establishing a historic district and/or redevelopment area that includes the downtown as a means to revitalizing and preserving the area.
- ◆ Preservation of space for a university was identified as a priority. The space could be preserved as open space until such time as a university decides to locate in the City. Support was expressed for the identification of an area where a hospital and university could conduct medical research, including light industrial areas.

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- ◆ Railroad and trucking access will be very important for business development.
 - ◆ The area surrounding Beale Air Force Base was identified as a good location for industrial uses. However, care should be taken to ensure that less-intensive uses are used to buffer residential uses from industrial uses, or other potential conflicts.
 - ◆ Large commercial concentrations should be located on the future 65 Bypass.
 - ◆ The City would like to see the development of multi-purpose, “full experience,” commercial areas that incorporate housing, recreation, public spaces, and commercial uses.
 - ◆ Large-scale commercial agriculture is incompatible with the urbanizing SOI; however, the City will not force anyone to sell or develop their land who does not desire to.
 - ◆ The City supports the County identifying agricultural preserves outside the City’s growth area.



The following is a summary of the discussion points provided at the Community Vision Workshop held on June 17, 2008.

Community Development and Design

- ◆ General support was expressed for the draft Community Development and Design Vision Principles.

Economic Development

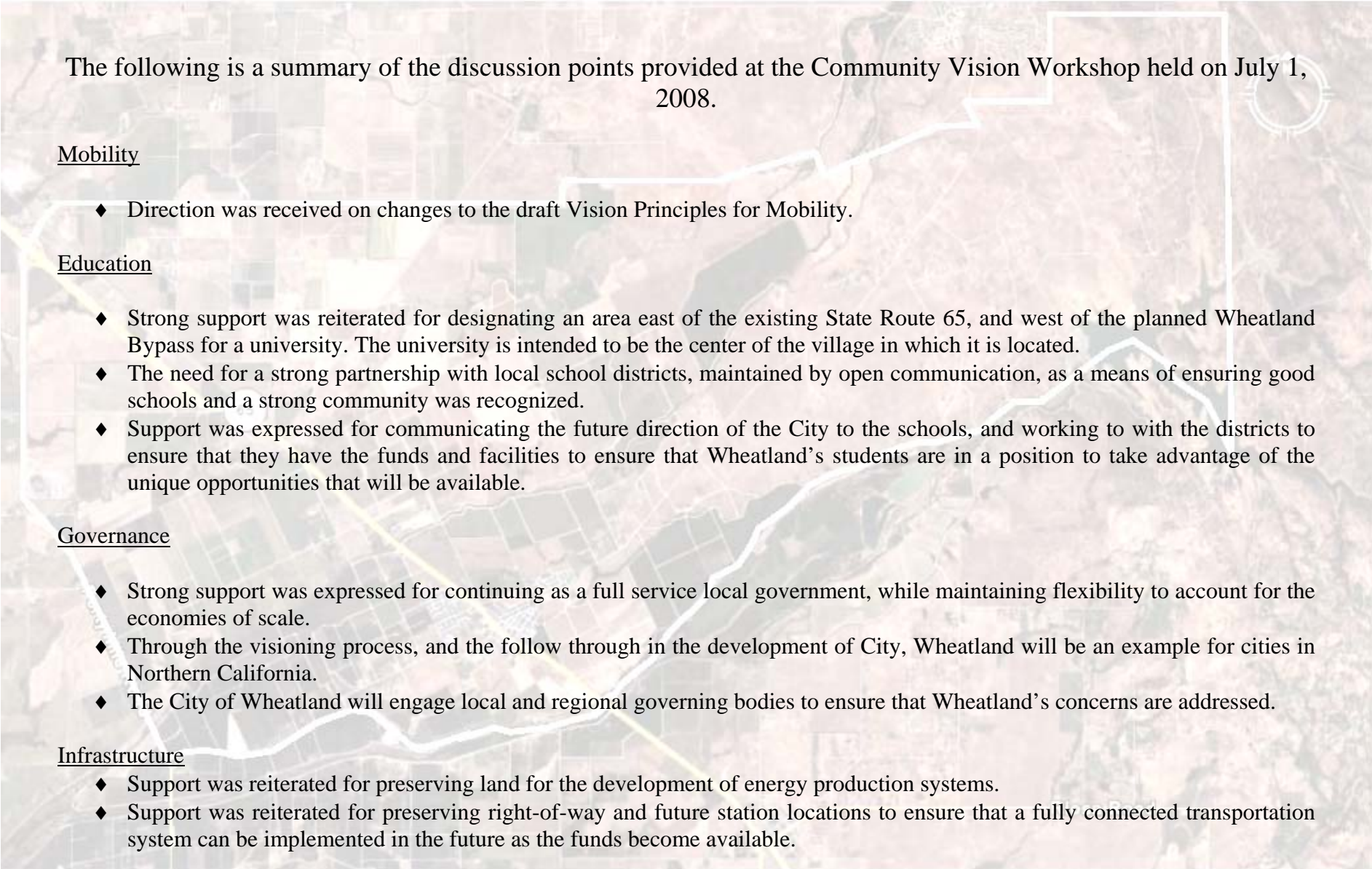
- ◆ Direction was received to include language addressing the role of agriculture in economic development.
- ◆ Additional direction was provided regarding the specific language of the draft Economic Development Vision Principles.

Urban Agriculture

- ◆ Strong support was expressed for providing opportunities for urban agriculture within residential areas, community oriented villages, and greenways.

Mobility

- ◆ Support was expressed for the designing for a future in which use of the personal automobile is rarely necessary.
- ◆ The need for automobiles to travel long distances was recognized, but their use should be minimized within the community.
- ◆ The safety of pedestrians and bicyclists was a substantial concern to be addressed in the planning of the transportation network.
- ◆ Strong support was expressed for re-establishing a rail connection to Roseville and Sacramento.
- ◆ The entire transportation network must be accessible to public safety vehicles for emergency and patrol purposes.
- ◆ Strong support was expressed for planning a public transit system and preserving right-of-way during development.
- ◆ Roadway networks and signals should be synchronized in such a way as to provide for the smooth flow of traffic, reduced air pollutant emissions, and ensure that the whole range of mobility options can safely connect to their destinations.



The following is a summary of the discussion points provided at the Community Vision Workshop held on July 1, 2008.

Mobility

- ◆ Direction was received on changes to the draft Vision Principles for Mobility.

Education

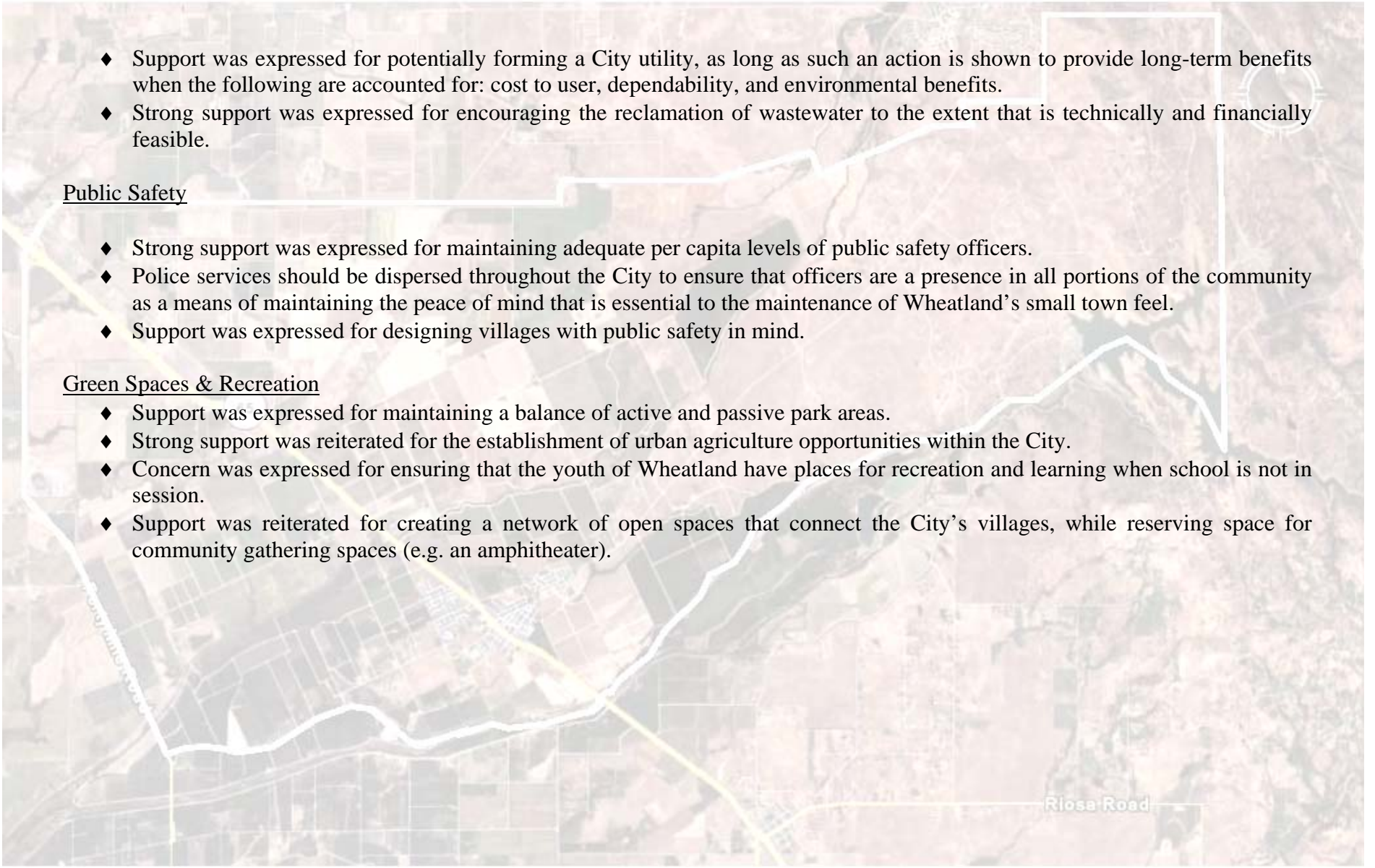
- ◆ Strong support was reiterated for designating an area east of the existing State Route 65, and west of the planned Wheatland Bypass for a university. The university is intended to be the center of the village in which it is located.
- ◆ The need for a strong partnership with local school districts, maintained by open communication, as a means of ensuring good schools and a strong community was recognized.
- ◆ Support was expressed for communicating the future direction of the City to the schools, and working to with the districts to ensure that they have the funds and facilities to ensure that Wheatland's students are in a position to take advantage of the unique opportunities that will be available.

Governance

- ◆ Strong support was expressed for continuing as a full service local government, while maintaining flexibility to account for the economies of scale.
- ◆ Through the visioning process, and the follow through in the development of City, Wheatland will be an example for cities in Northern California.
- ◆ The City of Wheatland will engage local and regional governing bodies to ensure that Wheatland's concerns are addressed.

Infrastructure

- ◆ Support was reiterated for preserving land for the development of energy production systems.
- ◆ Support was reiterated for preserving right-of-way and future station locations to ensure that a fully connected transportation system can be implemented in the future as the funds become available.

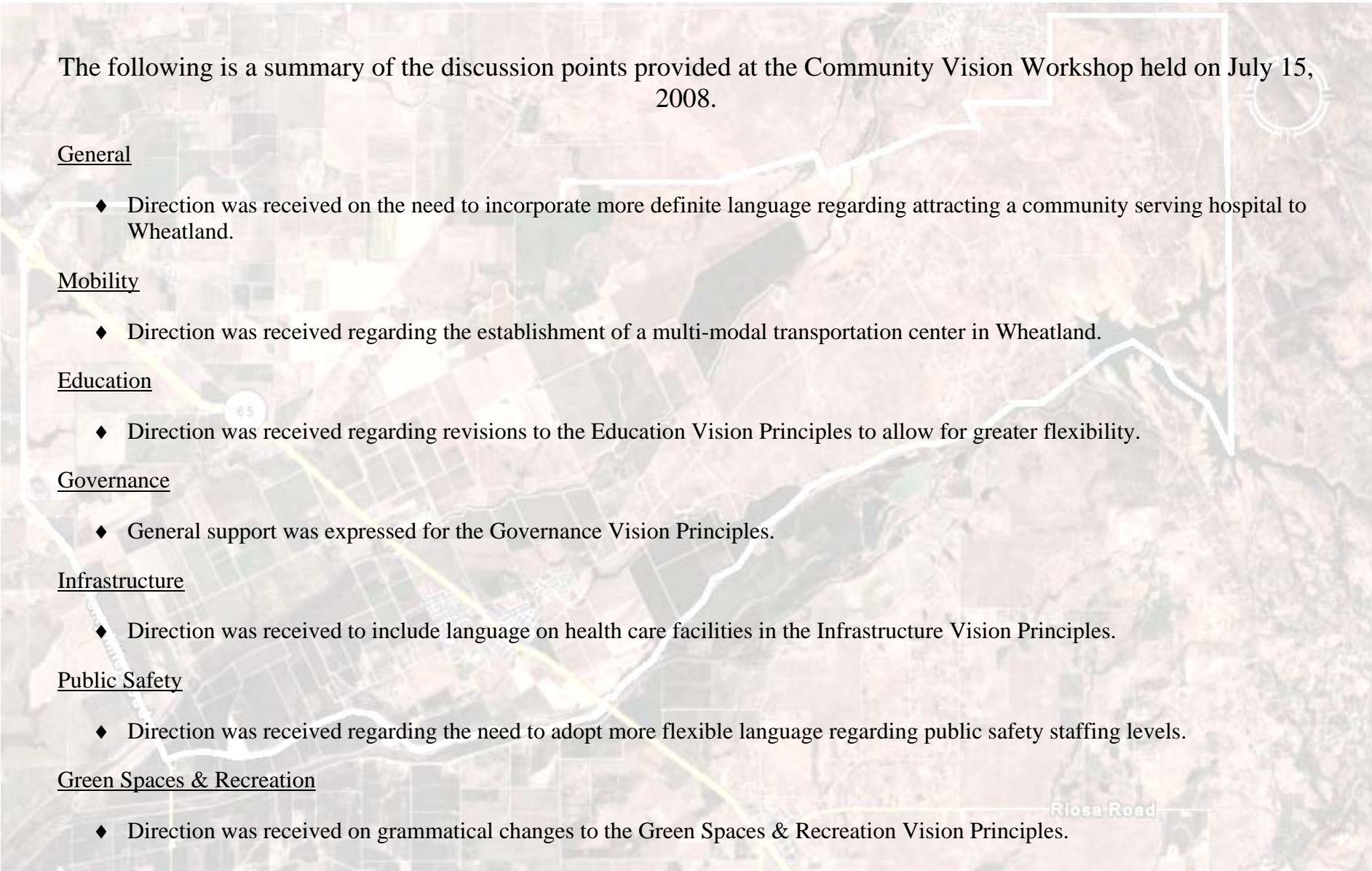
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- ◆ Support was expressed for potentially forming a City utility, as long as such an action is shown to provide long-term benefits when the following are accounted for: cost to user, dependability, and environmental benefits.
 - ◆ Strong support was expressed for encouraging the reclamation of wastewater to the extent that is technically and financially feasible.

Public Safety

- ◆ Strong support was expressed for maintaining adequate per capita levels of public safety officers.
- ◆ Police services should be dispersed throughout the City to ensure that officers are a presence in all portions of the community as a means of maintaining the peace of mind that is essential to the maintenance of Wheatland's small town feel.
- ◆ Support was expressed for designing villages with public safety in mind.

Green Spaces & Recreation

- ◆ Support was expressed for maintaining a balance of active and passive park areas.
- ◆ Strong support was reiterated for the establishment of urban agriculture opportunities within the City.
- ◆ Concern was expressed for ensuring that the youth of Wheatland have places for recreation and learning when school is not in session.
- ◆ Support was reiterated for creating a network of open spaces that connect the City's villages, while reserving space for community gathering spaces (e.g. an amphitheater).



The following is a summary of the discussion points provided at the Community Vision Workshop held on July 15, 2008.

General

- ◆ Direction was received on the need to incorporate more definite language regarding attracting a community serving hospital to Wheatland.

Mobility

- ◆ Direction was received regarding the establishment of a multi-modal transportation center in Wheatland.

Education

- ◆ Direction was received regarding revisions to the Education Vision Principles to allow for greater flexibility.

Governance

- ◆ General support was expressed for the Governance Vision Principles.

Infrastructure

- ◆ Direction was received to include language on health care facilities in the Infrastructure Vision Principles.

Public Safety

- ◆ Direction was received regarding the need to adopt more flexible language regarding public safety staffing levels.

Green Spaces & Recreation

- ◆ Direction was received on grammatical changes to the Green Spaces & Recreation Vision Principles.

APPENDIX B

Community Vision: Urban Agriculture

The following three levels have been identified by Staff as areas in which urban agriculture can be included in the Wheatland Community Vision: personal space, village oriented community space, school space, and greenbelt areas. For discussion of different types of urban agriculture, please refer to the discussion on the following pages.

Agriculture in Residences

Language could be included in the Community Vision which encourages the development of larger lot residential areas to allow residents to own usable space. Policies could also be written which discourage the adoption of community covenants and restrictions which prohibit the growing of edible landscaping, or require certain percentages of front yard lawn.

Agriculture in Village Oriented Communities

Language could be included in the Community Vision which encourages, or requires, community parks to include space for gardens. The amount allotted to community gardens could be based on a percentage of the surrounding population, a percentage of total park area, or as a fixed number. The intention would be to include community gardens in every village to provide residents with access to land, and facilitate the establishment of a community gathering place. The community gardens could also include areas for the creation of gardens and edible landscaping as part of school sites. The growing and cooking of school grown fruits and vegetables can be incorporated into classes on biology and cooking at all levels of education.

Agriculture in Greenbelts

Language could be included in the Community Vision which encourages, or requires, the preservation of areas within future greenbelts for community serving agricultural use. The areas would be large enough to grow crops for local markets, while being small enough to allow for cultivation without the use of industrial scale tractors and crop dusters. The land could be leased to individuals or groups. A farm stand could be located on the farm site to provide direct sale of produce, or the produce could be sold at the farmers market.

Urban Agriculture

What is Urban Agriculture

Urban agriculture includes greenbelts around cities, farming at the city's edge, vegetable plots in community gardens, and food production in thousands of vacant inner-city lots. Further, urban agriculture comprises: fish farms, farm animals at public housing sites, municipal compost facilities, schoolyard greenhouses, restaurant-supported salad gardens, backyard orchards, rooftop gardens and beehives, window box gardens, and much more. Urban farming includes horticulture, aquaculture, arboriculture, and poultry and animal husbandry.

Main Varieties of Urban Agriculture

Home Gardening

Anyone who grows fruits, vegetables, flowers, or animals on their property for food or enjoyment is engaged in urban agriculture. Substantially quantities of food can be grown on the typical suburban lot, and a few hens can provide all the eggs a small family needs. During World War II the government established the Victory Garden program to reduce demand for commercially grown foods. Gardens grown in front lawns and vacant lots produced hundreds of tons of fruits and vegetables during the period from 1943 to 1945. More recently interest in gardening, food safety, and small livestock husbandry has resulted in cities around the country reforming laws that had banned growing vegetables in the front yard, and backyard poultry flocks. Another recent variant on gardening within the personal space is the creation of themed developments that create large lots (several acres in size) that allow for the planting of a vineyard or orchard. The plantings can be managed by the owners, or an agricultural firm is brought in to make a vintage from the harvest of the entire subdivision.



Clos Du Loc

Clos Du Loc is a gated community of 89 homes surrounded by vineyards, olive groves, and lakes in the City of Loomis. Home sites range from 0.5



acres to 23 acres. The community was developed with a design theme based on the Mediterranean farmhouses and country villas of southern France.

Over twenty acres of vineyards are grown and harvested by the community and sold to a variety of Napa and Foothill based wineries that produce premium wines from the traditional head-pruned vines. The vineyards include varieties typical of Southern France including Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot, Petite Syrah and Mourvèdre.



School Gardens



Based in part on the pioneering work of Alice Waters and the Edible Schoolyard, school gardens are a growing movement. The goal is to create and sustain a garden and edible landscape that is wholly integrated into the school's curriculum and lunch program. The programs involve the students in all aspects of farming the garden – along with preparing, serving and eating the food – as a means of encouraging awareness and appreciation of the values of nourishment, community, and stewardship of the land.

Community Gardens

Community gardens are established to provide local residents and opportunity to garden that otherwise may be unable to do so. Typical reasons may include living in an apartment or condominium, having a yard that is too shady, and looking for a community to garden with. Plots range in size, but are typically quite small. The garden plots are typically initially allotted on a first come first served basis, and thereafter a seniority system is established to ensure that long time gardeners can keep the same plot they have been improving over the years. New gardeners join as previous gardeners leave. The following gardens are located within the Sacramento area:

Fremont Community Gardens
(Midtown Sacramento)
Plots: 50
Annual fee: N/A
Status: Waiting List



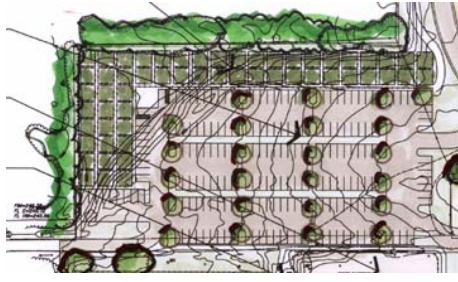
Phoenix Park Community Garden

Plots: 52

Annual fee: \$24 for residents of Fair Oaks Recreation and Park District

Status: Waiting list

The 52 plots border a parking lot in a corner of the park.



Fair Oaks Community Garden

The Fair Oaks Community Garden, nestled in the back of Fair Oaks Park, enjoys a wealth of gardening expertise, along with free land and water from the Fair Oaks Park District. Gardeners must have a Fair Oaks zip code to get a highly coveted plot in the garden.

More than 10 people certified as master gardeners by the University of California work plots or tend fruit trees next door at a demonstration garden. The demonstration garden includes sections on fruit trees, grape vines, berry growing, vegetables, native plant gardens, and water conserving gardens. Signs explaining proper irrigation and plant choice are



located throughout the demonstration garden. Currently, some of the master gardeners are beginning a study of composting systems that will review approximately 10 different designs of composting bins.

The Community Garden and Demonstration Garden regularly hold open houses to educate the community. Open houses typically include lectures on pest control, irrigation, care of fruit trees and bushes, and water wise landscaping. Funding and supplies are provided by local nurseries and the Sacramento County UC Cooperative Extension, Fair Oaks Recreation and Park District, Fair Oaks Water District, and Folsom Water District.

Small Market Farming

Small market farmers typically grow specialty crops to serve restaurants, farmer's markets, and ethnic markets. Typically the land is leased either for cash payments or payments of crops. The location of farms is often not organized by local jurisdictions, and the farms come and go as owners seek to develop land, or convert to another use. However, some jurisdictions have encouraged market gardening by allowing farms in greenbelts, or by providing access to vacant lots within a city.



Soil Born Urban Agriculture Project

Soil Born began as a small for profit market garden on 1.5 acres next to the Jonas Salk High-Tech Academy in the Arden-Arcade area of Sacramento. The farmers leased the land surrounding a house in return for vegetables. The farmers began a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program and began producing vegetables and flowers for approximately 30 families [A CSA is a system whereby individuals or families buy a share of the produce of a farm, typically a box of vegetables weekly, at the beginning of a year. The system benefits the farmer by providing a sure source of income, and connects customers to their food supply].



Soil Born has since become a non-profit corporation that works with schools to teach healthy eating, cooking, and gardening skills. The farmland has expanded to include a 40 acre site within the American River Parkway through a 20-year lease with Sacramento County. Soil Born continues to sell vegetables to restaurants, grocery stores, at farmers markets, and from a stand on the American River property. They have found that community demand is close to exceeding their current ability to produce fruits and vegetables, and has far exceeded their egg supply.

Food Security

Over the last few years food security has become a larger issue in the public consciousness as food producers have been forced to recall large amounts of beef, spinach, and now tomatoes. The following articles recently appeared in the Sacramento Bee about the recall of tomatoes.

Tomatoes pulled after FDA safety warning

By Jim Downing and Mike Dunne - jdowning@sacbee.com

Published 8:50 am PDT Tuesday, June 10, 2008

Popular varieties of fresh tomatoes have been pulled from restaurant menus and produce aisles across Northern California as a nationwide salmonella outbreak now linked to 145 illnesses in 16 states continues to spread.

In Sacramento, supermarkets pulled field-grown red round, red Roma and red plum varieties from store shelves over the weekend. Chain restaurants from McDonald's to Noah's Bagels stopped serving tomatoes altogether.

Uncertainty about the source of tomatoes linked to the illnesses prompted the U.S. Food and Drug Administration on Saturday to issue a nationwide food safety warning, urging people not to eat the three types of tomatoes.

In California, only two illnesses have been linked to the outbreak, and officials say at least one of the victims ate contaminated tomatoes on a recent trip out of state.

A major local produce distributor said the region's restaurants are trying to comply with the warning, which contains a host of qualifications, but many are finding it confusing.

"Officials are saying there are bad tomatoes out there, but they can't find them, they don't know where they are from," said Jim Mills, sales manager at Produce Express in Sacramento, which supplies fruits and vegetables to hundreds of local eateries. He said his office fielded more than 300 calls Monday from anxious customers.

The outbreak was first spotted in New Mexico and Texas, where investigators identified 57 tomato-related salmonella infections, apparently from a common source, between April 23 and June 1. In the past week, genetic testing has linked dozens of additional salmonella infections in other states to the same source.

At least 23 people have been hospitalized. No deaths have been reported.

At this time of year, according to industry experts, most red round, red Roma and red plum tomatoes sold in California and across the country come from just two regions: Florida and Mexico. Since the FDA has been unable to narrow its investigation to a particular farm or packing operation, all three of the popular-variety tomatoes from those areas are suspect.

The FDA has cleared several varieties and sources of tomatoes as safe to eat. Those sold with the vine attached, tomatoes grown in greenhouses, cherry and grape tomatoes, and homegrown tomatoes are not believed to be associated with the outbreak. In addition, all varieties of tomatoes grown in certain regions, including California, have been cleared.

Local supermarkets now are carrying only the approved varieties.

All those details have been tough to follow, said Frank Brida, owner of Luigi's Pizza Parlor along Stockton Boulevard. Until he gets some more clarification from local public-health authorities, Brida said, he's not using fresh tomatoes at all.

Shoppers at the Save Mart on Fair Oaks Boulevard in Sacramento, however, said Monday afternoon they were confident in the safety of the store's produce.

"I'm not an alarmist," said Beth Foondos of Sacramento. She'd seen the reports about the salmonella outbreak but said the warnings didn't cross her mind as she picked out some hothouse tomatoes Monday. It would take a more serious hazard, she said, to keep tomatoes out of her family's kitchen.

"We're Greek. We eat tomatoes all the time," she said.

In the next few weeks, as tomatoes in the San Joaquin Valley begin to ripen, Sacramento-area markets and restaurants will begin to get most of their tomatoes from California, according to Ed Beckman, who heads a Fresno-based farmers' cooperative that produces about 80 percent of the state's billion-pound-a-year fresh tomato crop. Unless the outbreak takes an unexpected twist, he said, the FDA warning should have little impact on farmers.

While the Sacramento region is a great place to grow fresh garden tomatoes, most tomatoes visible in local farm fields – and in the tomato trailers on highways in summer – are processing tomatoes, which are churned into tomato paste and then used to make pizza sauce, ketchup and dozens of other products. By weight, nearly 95 percent of the tomatoes grown on California farms are used for processing.

Jim Gorny, who directs the Postharvest Center at UC Davis, said no major salmonella outbreak has ever been tied to a California tomato farm.

Trevor Suslow, another UC Davis produce safety expert, said the salmonella bacteria could have reached the tomatoes linked to the outbreak in many ways, from dirty water used for irrigation to the feces of wild birds, mammals or even reptiles. Industry food-safety efforts focus on preventing salmonella contamination in the first place, Suslow said, because it is virtually impossible to wash off salmonella bacteria once they have colonized a tomato.

Symptoms of salmonella infection appear within 12 to 72 hours of eating tainted food, can last four to seven days, and may include diarrhea, fever and abdominal cramps.

Most people bounce back from the disease without treatment, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. But some develop more serious problems. Salmonella bacteria can spread from the intestines to the bloodstream and then throughout the body, sometimes leading to death.

Infants, elderly people and those with impaired immune systems are more likely than others to develop severe illness.

U.S. farm bill is a lost opportunity for food safety

By Michael Doyle - McClatchy Newspapers

Published 12:00 am PDT Wednesday, June 11, 2008

WASHINGTON – Tainted tomatoes and a nationwide salmonella outbreak highlight how Congress forfeited some food-safety opportunities in the new U.S. farm bill.

The outbreak attributed to tomatoes comes just as Congress and President Bush are finishing their farm bill tug of war. The bill about to become law omits some of the highest-profile food-safety proposals that lawmakers once offered.

"Food safety is never a key issue for any farm bill," Chris Waldrop, the food policy director for the Consumer Federation of America, said Tuesday.

The omission appears particularly poignant now, as at least 167 people in 17 states have fallen ill from salmonella poisoning since mid-April. The Food and Drug Administration is urging consumers to avoid raw Roma, plum or red round tomatoes. Restaurants, including McDonald's, have removed them from their menus temporarily.

This isn't a one-of-a-kind occurrence. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 300,000 Americans are hospitalized each year, and 5,000 die, because of food-borne illnesses. The farm bill nonetheless remains silent on many food-safety issues.

The Senate, for instance, originally wanted a new 15-member food-safety commission to conduct a wide-ranging study and issue recommendations. The proposed commission ran into opposition in the House of Representatives, and negotiators killed it.

Similarly, Rep. Dennis Cardoza, D-Atwater, wanted to move border plant and animal inspectors back to the Agriculture Department. The demoralized inspectors feel shortchanged under the Department of Homeland Security, congressional investigators said. The Bush administration opposed the transfer, and the provision died.

"The agriculture committees' orientation is not food safety," Waldrop said. "You can make small, incremental steps, but you are never going to make big structural food-safety changes through a farm bill." There are several reasons for that.

Politically, the House and Senate agriculture committee members who write the farm bill tend to be protective of agribusiness. They aren't out to make enemies by imposing strict new rules.

Tactically, some lawmakers feared that a food safety commission would sap momentum for a more ambitious FDA overhaul. On Thursday, a House Energy and Commerce Committee panel will hold a hearing on the FDA's food-safety work, with some House members pressing to give the federal agency mandatory recall authority over tainted food.

"This situation is another chilling example of the flaws in our nation's food-safety system," declared Rep. Diana DeGette, D-Colo.

In other cases, though, farm bill authors retreated from measures that some feared would undermine food safety.

Western fruit and vegetable growers, for instance, hoped that the farm bill would authorize self-regulation through industry-run marketing orders. Handlers of California leafy greens imposed such a plan after a 2006 outbreak of sickness traced to Salinas-area spinach tainted by E. coli bacteria. Environmentalists successfully opposed the idea of giving industry more power to regulate itself.

"It is clear from the California leafy-green experience that it is bad for natural resources and environmental protection," said Ferd Hoefner, policy director for the Sustainable Agriculture Coalition.

The sprawling farm bill includes 15 subject areas, ranging from commodities to energy. Food safety doesn't merit its own title. The farm bill has a five-year price tag of \$289 billion to \$307 billion. Only a small percentage of that addresses food safety.

Key safe-tomato clues: Where they're grown, how they're handled

By Jim Downing - jdowning@sachee.com

Published 12:00 am PDT Wednesday, June 11, 2008

The fresh tomatoes we buy pass through many hands before we sink our teeth into them. Most of the time we can bite with the confidence that they're not going to make us sick.

As the outbreak of salmonella shows, though, the food safety system isn't fail-safe. Harmful bacteria can colonize a tomato at many points on the path from vine to salad bowl.

The strategies used to keep those bugs out of your belly differ depending on how and where a tomato was grown. Here are five varieties found in Sacramento in late spring and summer.

- Mexican red Roma, red plum and red round: These types of tomatoes are the likely culprits in the nationwide outbreak – but, of course, they're not all bad.

Tomatoes of this sort generally are picked just as they're beginning to turn from green to red. They're usually washed in a warm bath of chlorinated water, and then ripen on their way to market. The warm Mexican climate allows farms to supply a large share of the U.S. tomato market in the winter and spring.

Contamination of fresh tomatoes with polluted water is a big concern on Mexican farms, said Trevor Suslow, a produce safety expert at the University of California, Davis. In order to keep their lucrative U.S. contracts, many farms have gone to great lengths to keep their tomatoes safe, including installing water-treatment plants to provide clean water for irrigation and washing.

Supermarkets that sell field-grown Mexican tomatoes generally have elaborate food-safety contracts with suppliers. These agreements are meant to ensure compliance with a host of guidelines, including testing of soil and water quality and hygiene requirements for workers.

- Hothouse tomatoes (often sold with the vine attached): These are grown indoors along the West Coast from British Columbia to Mexico. They are typically picked ripe, and then, without being washed, are immediately put into plastic containers labeled with codes that allow tracking all the way to the store shelf, according to Jim Gorny, who directs the Postharvest Center at UC Davis.

Growing tomatoes indoors where the fruit likely won't touch soil or water keeps the risk of food-borne illness low, though contamination during handling is always a possibility.

- Heirloom and other farmers market tomatoes: Several local farmers who sell tomatoes direct to consumers said their main food-safety priority is to make sure that pickers keep their hands clean. Farmers market varieties are grown on trellises and drip-irrigated so the tomatoes generally don't come into contact with soil or water.

Thaddeus Barsotti, who runs Capay Organic in Yolo County and grows about 250,000 pounds of heirloom tomatoes a year, said his tomatoes are too fragile to be washed after harvest. They're packed in low boxes and then delivered, generally within a day. Barsotti encourages his customers to wash tomatoes at home.

- Standard supermarket tomatoes (the common red varieties sold without stems in supermarkets around the country in summer): These tomatoes grow on low, bushy plants that don't require trellises. They are picked while still green and hard, washed in warm chlorinated water, sorted, and then shipped to ripening depots around the country. There, ethylene gas – a natural ripening agent – drives the tomatoes to turn red.

Within a few weeks, local supermarkets will begin selling this sort of fresh tomato, grown the length of the San Joaquin Valley.

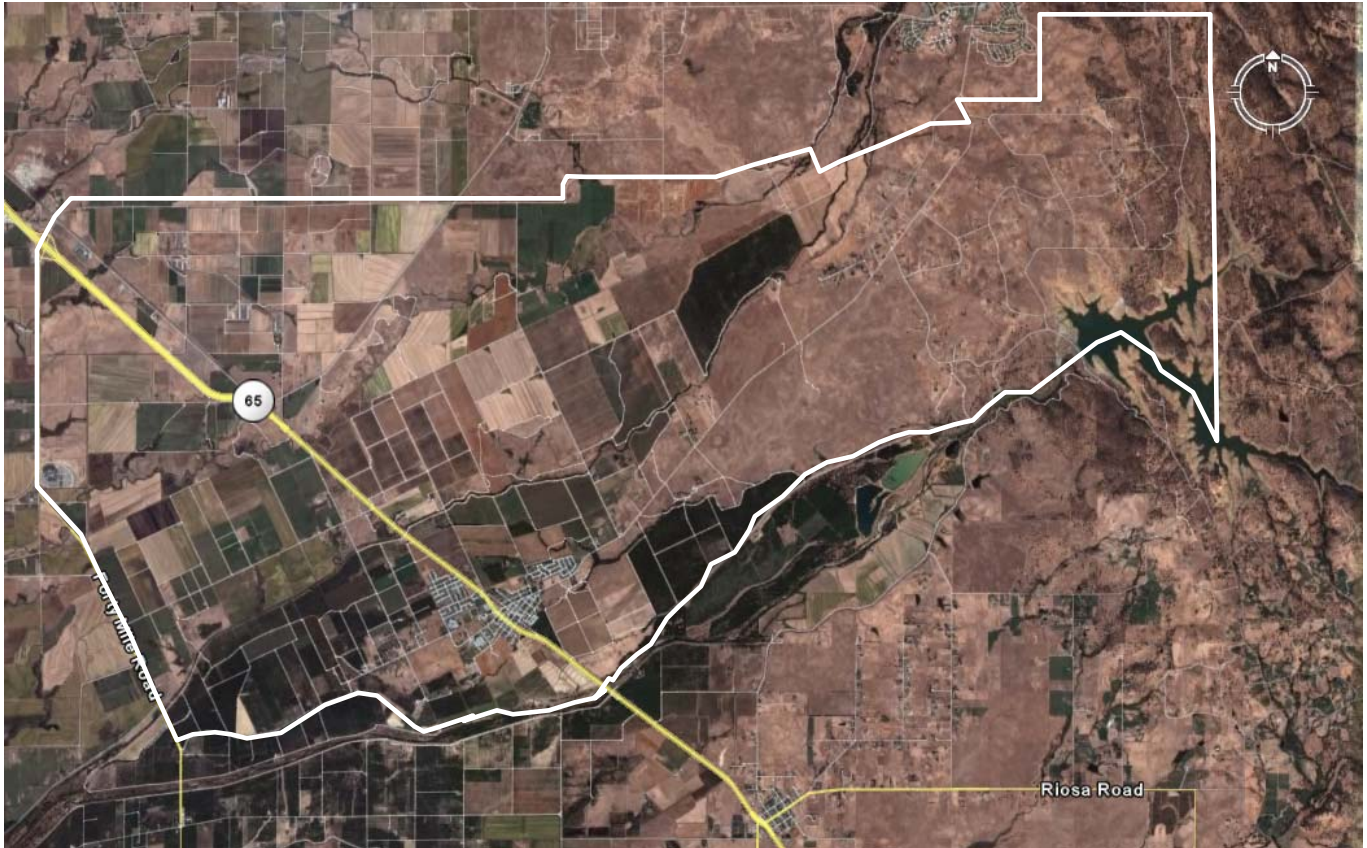
The mingling of mature green tomatoes from multiple farms during ripening can make it difficult to trace an outbreak of foodborne illness back to an individual farm, said UC Davis' Gorny.

Ed Beckman, president of California Tomato Farmers, a cooperative representing about 80 percent of the state's fresh tomato production, said new tracking systems have made it possible to trace his members' tomatoes back to the field in which they were grown. His group has also adopted comprehensive food-safety standards, including water-quality testing and standardized washing and handling procedures, that are audited by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

- Finally, there are backyard tomatoes, which grow wonderfully in the Sacramento summer. Potential sources of contamination include dirty hands, manure used for fertilizer, and dog poop.

APPENDIX C

City of Wheatland



Community Vision Workbook



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Note: This workbook is provided for you to continue to use throughout the Visioning process. You are encouraged to continue to add to the workbook as the process advances.

Introduction to the Community Vision

In order to function as viable entities, communities must have a vision of the future. The feeling of “community” that is evident in most successful cities exists in part because of a defined vision. Such a community vision helps to create the feeling among the citizens that they are in control of their own destiny. The vision provides guidance to the community leaders when making decisions that affect the future of the city. In addition, by providing and publicizing a community vision, the city provides businesses and nonprofit groups the opportunity to mold their respective mission statements to make them compatible with the community’s vision and plan. Therefore, the Community Vision should be designed to provide an encompassing statement, or statements, that provide general direction on the aspirations of the City of Wheatland.

Community Vision

What are some words that express what Wheatland’s vision should be with regards to the following areas:

What do you value most about living and or working in Wheatland today?

What do you want Wheatland to be valued for in the future?

In your opinion, what is Wheatland’s current image?

What would you like Wheatland’s image to be?

In your vision of Wheatland, why should residents and businesses choose to be located here?

What features currently differentiate, or should differentiate in the future, Wheatland from other cities?

What land uses must be incorporated into Wheatland's long term vision?

What land uses should be incorporated into Wheatland's long term vision?

What future challenges should Wheatland enthusiastically address through planning and design?

Additional Notes:

[illegible]

Introduction to the Vision Principles

The Vision Principles provide greater direction within specific topic areas to functionally define the Community Vision. Within each of the following topic areas Vision Principles should be identified that, when embraced, will carry out the Wheatland Community Vision.

Topic Areas

The following topic areas have been conceptualized as the City of Wheatland Vision Principles, additional areas may be added; however, the selections have been chosen for their ability to encompass numerous areas of broad opportunity and concern, as opposed to more specific issues which were addressed in the General Plan.

Vision Principle 1 - Environmental Resources

1. What does the term sustainable community mean to you?

2. Which of the following examples illustrates your vision of what the City of Wheatland should aim for with regards to the environment? (For example, with respect to rivers and creeks, the City should strive to develop in a way that _____ the Bear River).

- a. Mitigates Impacts*
- b. Maintains*
- c. Sustains*
- d. Improves*
- e. Avoids*

3. What level of priority (high, medium, low) should the City place on designing infrastructure to provide environmental benefits (e.g. using future wastewater system water to create wetlands and bird habitat)?

Additional Notes:

Vision Principle 2 - Community Development and Design

1. Does the “center” of the City mean the geographic center, the current center of activity, or does the center refer to the historical center of business?

Listed below are a few potential ways of conceptualizing the future Community Design of the City of Wheatland.

Downtown as primary center of the City:

Pro: Historic heart of the City, historic architecture conveys small town feel, _____

Con: Limited room for growth, new commercial or office buildings would likely be out of scale with the existing structures, railroad traffic has an adverse impact on both transportation and the noise environment, _____

A sample vision principle for a vision in which the existing downtown is the primary center of the City would be:

- Maintain and expand a vibrant downtown that serves as a regional destination while accommodating residents that live, work, and gather in the city center.

Downtown as gathering place, but with the primary center of business and government located adjacent to the State Route 65 Bypass:

Pro: Would improve mobility by locating adjacent to the major transportation corridor, _____

Con: Would move the center of the City away from Downtown, _____

The following is a sample vision principle that might reflect this vision:

- The Wheatland Vision promotes an urban development pattern that is compact and efficient and that permits the most effective and cost-efficient provision of city facilities and services. Such a development pattern enhances the livability of the community for its residents by increasing accessibility to employment, recreation, shopping and other amenities and by reducing auto travel and air pollution.

Burroughs system with multiple centers serving neighborhoods:

Pro: Could further the development of distinct neighborhoods by building around central features (e.g. a university, commercial center, park, or a mixture of land uses targeted to serve neighborhoods), _____

Con: _____

The following are sample vision principles that might reflect this vision:

- Neighborhoods will be served by a hierarchy of mixed-use activity centers.
- Create vibrant public places that serve as gathering places, town centers, and villages for the community.

2. Based on your responses to the above examples what is your vision for the community design of Wheatland?

3. What types of uses do you want to see in the ultimate sphere of influence?

Additional Notes:

[illegible]

Vision Principle 3 - Economic Development

1. What role do you envision for agriculture in Wheatland’s economic/land use future?

2. What kinds of jobs should the City of Wheatland pursue?

3. Should the City of Wheatland facilitate the development of opportunities for high-technology and light industrial businesses to locate near Beale Air Force Base to locally address the military’s needs?

Additional Notes:

Vision Principle 4 - Mobility

1. What is your vision for the private automobile in serving transportation needs?

2. What is your vision for public transportation (including bus, rail, and other potential means)?

3. What is your vision for alternative modes of transportation (e.g. bicycles, walking, neighborhood electric vehicles, etc.)?

4. In 25 years, how do you envision yourself being mobile?

Additional Notes:

Vision Principle 5 - Education

1. Should the City facilitate the location of a university in the City of Wheatland?

1a. If so, should it be designed to serve as the center of the neighborhood in which it is located?

2. Should the public school system be designed to further studies in specific areas (e.g. medical, technology and science, arts, etc.) or be maintained as a high quality general education?

Additional Note:

Vision Principle 6 - Governance

1. Should the City of Wheatland be a full-service local government that coordinates, and potentially operates, a full range of services provided to the residents of Wheatland?

2. What role does governance in Wheatland play at a regional level?

3. In 25 years, should Wheatland be the driving force for decision-making in Yuba County?

Additional Notes:

Vision Principle 7 - Infrastructure

1. Should land be preserved for the development of energy production systems?

2. Should right-of-way be preserved for public transportation?

3. Do you envision Wheatland operating its own electric utility, or is that desirable? If so, why?

4. How should high quality wastewater treatment services be achieved?

Additional Notes:

Vision Principle 8 - Public Safety

1. What are your expectations for the provision of public safety services in Wheatland?

2. *What role, if any, should/can design and architecture play in making the City safe and secure?*

Additional Notes:

[illegible]

Vision Principle 9 - Green Spaces and Recreation

1. Should the development of traditional parks and sports fields be an equal, subordinate, or greater priority than the preservation of natural open space for unstructured recreation and habitat preservation when identifying park/open space areas?

2. Should the City prioritize the creation of community gardens, and/or the provision of urban agriculture opportunities?

3. Should public gathering places (plazas, squares, amphitheaters, greens, etc.) be located throughout the City, or concentrated in a primary location (e.g. adjacent to City Hall)?

4. Should access to and preservation of the City's waterways be a high, medium, or low priority?

Additional Notes:
